

imprints

The Newsletter of Literacy BC

Literacy brought to the Hill

Over 65 members of the literacy community from across Canada gathered in Ottawa on February 18th for the 1999 Literacy Action Day (LAD). Literacy BC Executive Director Linda Mitchell, and President Paul Gallagher were on hand working with other literacy groups to raise support for literacy issues among federal politicians.



Paul Gallagher, Linda Mitchell, Herb Dhaliwal (Minister of National Revenue), Pearl Benyk (NWT), Liesel Briggs (Yukon) and Joy Caldwell (Yukon) at Literacy Action Day.

Literacy practitioners and adult learners met with 82 Members of Parliament and two Senators to discuss solutions to literacy problems in Canada.

This year, the focus for Literacy Action Day was on four areas within the jurisdiction of the federal government — health, employment, aboriginal literacy and justice.

The key messages that were given to politicians were:

Literacy and Health

Statistics show that low literacy can lead to poor health due in part to the lack of easy-to-read health information. Literacy

advocates believe that great inroads can be achieved if a partnership between the health and adult education fields could lead to the development of plain language health information.

Literacy and Employment

People with low literacy skills have a harder time getting and keeping a job. Literacy advocates are looking for a training system to be developed that will help Canadians prepare for and get work. Workplace literacy programs would also benefit both workers and employers.

Literacy and Justice

Literacy organizations have been very active in the development of effective

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Special Pull-out Learners' Section:

...Learners' Network

...Learners' Voices

...Fearless Writing

Great resources, new system

Did you know that Literacy BC maintains the largest lending collection of literacy resources in B.C.? We have a specialized collection of approximately 1,600 literacy materials — including books, periodicals and videos which you can borrow.

What's new with the Literacy BC resource centre?

Lots! Our library has been fully catalogued and automated. Now we can search for and check out materials, and keep patron records up-to-date using our automated circulation system. Best of all, we can produce bibliographies on different topics within the resource centre, for example, on family, workforce or aboriginal literacy, on programs using volunteer tutors and many other topics. If you let us know what you're looking for, we'll send you a list of the resources we have.

Who can use the resource centre?

The library is available to all members of Literacy BC and

anyone working in the literacy field as practitioners, tutors, students or researchers. We also serve members of the general public.

Can I access the Literacy BC collection through the Internet?

Yes. The Literacy BC resource collection is now listed on Outlook Online ILL (Inter Library Loan). Outlook is a web-based catalogue of B.C.'s public, college and institute libraries operated by Library Services Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Literacy BC is the first non-profit, specialized library to be listed on Outlook. Anyone in B.C. with web access can now search the Literacy BC resource collection on-line through Outlook and make a request to borrow using interlibrary loan. The address is www.auto-graphics.com/cgipac/mmx/bcuc/Access.



May Chan comes to us from the Master of Library and Information Studies program at UBC, where she is a first year student. May is assisting two mornings a week in our Resource Centre, through an arrangement partially funded by the Youth Community Action Program (students receive tuition credit for volunteer hours worked).

National developments.

At a meeting in Ottawa in November, 1998, literacy resource centres across the country agreed to collaborate in developing a system to share information about resources. Different ways of sharing resources are now being considered by a sub-committee, of which Literacy BC is a member. We will keep newsletter readers posted of developments.

Thank You!

The development of the Resource Centre is made possible through:

- The B.C. literacy cost-shared program, Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology; Human Resources Development Canada — The National Literacy Secretariat
- The Vancouver Foundation
- Library Services Branch, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Computers are on the way

ABC CANADA has notified us that the shipment of computers from The Co-operators is continuing. The company, which donated over 400 used computers to literacy groups across Canada (46 in B.C.) is first



reconditioning the equipment and then

shipping computers out as work on them is completed. The whole process could take up to a few more weeks.

Thanks again to The Co-operators, ABC CANADA and the National Literacy Secretariat for making this possible. Your computer is on its way!



Family Literacy Day — A look back



FAMILY LITERACY
DAY

The first ever Family Literacy Day on January 27 was a great success. The national campaign to promote

awareness of family literacy, led by Honda Canada in partnership with ABC CANADA, met with an enthusiastic response in the B.C. literacy community.

We were delighted to have the Grizzlies Foundation and Starbucks Coffee Company join us in celebrating and supporting this wonderful event. The Grizzlies' generous donation of over 50 talking teddy bears — Spinoza Bears — to family literacy programs in B.C. was a wonderful gift that will go a long way to encourage families learning and reading together. We are very pleased to report that a number of literacy programs took Spinoza the Bear to breakfast with the mayor of their town on January 27!

Here are some highlights of how Family Literacy Day was celebrated:

- Starbucks hosted a pre-Family Literacy Day party at its West Vancouver store on January 26. West Vancouver Mayor Patricia Boname and Literacy BC President Paul Gallagher were on hand to welcome the group.
- The Starbucks Foundation

donated \$5,000 (U.S.) to Literacy BC for family literacy development which was used in part to produce more than 50,000 family literacy public awareness rack cards. Starbucks Stores across B.C. handed out 26,000 of the cards to customers on January 27.

- Thirty-eight mayors in towns across B.C. proclaimed January 27 Family Literacy Day. Literacy BC received letters and original proclamations signed by mayors and forwarded them to the local family literacy group.
- Melanie Austin, Literacy BC Treasurer, attended the Grizzlies' press conference in Victoria on January 27 with the B.C. Minister of Education, Paul Ramsey.
- Banner ads for Family Literacy Day appeared in *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* from January 22 to 27 and a full-page ad ran in the January 27 edition of *The Vancouver Sun*.

In Mount Currie

- The Mount Currie Literacy Committee hosted a potluck community dinner followed by a play, a book exchange, dancing and drumming.

In Northern B.C.

- Northern Lights Regional Coordinator Donna Kane put together a supply of book bags full of donated books for each campus of Northern Lights College and organized a free raffle draw at public libraries.

And in Duncan

- Malaspina/North Island Regional Coordinator Christina Patterson hosted an event which brought together children from a local daycare, their parents and other students with a group of seniors from an extended health care facility in the community.

Around the Province:

In Fort Nelson

- Sarah Stocker at the Fort Nelson Drop-in Learning Centre organized publicity in the local media leading up to Family Literacy Day, followed by a Mother Goose presentation and a special story hour and book draw at the local library on January 27.



Two young readers with a parent at Queen Alexandra Elementary School in Vancouver on January 27.



THE STARBUCKS FOUNDATION



HONDA

ABC
CANADA

Literacy project seeks writers

Professor Maurice Taylor is seeking input from the literacy community for a new book on adult literacy.

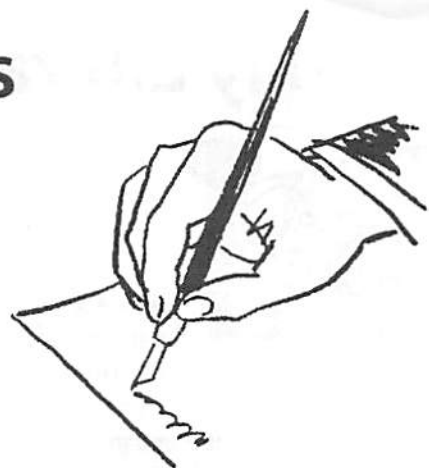
Adult Literacy Comes of Age in Canada, funded by the National Literacy Secretariat, is a two-year millennium project "to develop a profound and integrative book on adult literacy in Canada."

This project will bring together four faces of the adult literacy picture — community-based, workplace, family and child and youth literacy. Each of the four book themes will include a combination of the academic and field-written chapters. Culture Concepts Publishers will publish

the book in the year 2000, some time before International Literacy Day (September 8).

Professor Taylor is soliciting input from anyone who may be interested in writing a chapter for the book in any of the four theme areas. At present, there are four academics writing the framing chapters for each of the theme areas. These chapters will serve as vehicles for further reflections, as 16 selected field writers come together in the spring to develop their chapter outlines and a table of contents for the manuscript.

Submissions from potential writers will be accepted until the end of April.



For more details of this project, contact:

Professor Maurice Taylor
Faculty of Education
University of Ottawa
145 Jean Jacques Lussier Street
Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5
Phone: (613) 562-5900 Ext. 4037
Fax: (613) 562-5146
E-mail: mtaylor@uottawa.ca

Literacy Action Day on the Hill *(Continued from page one)*

approaches to help ex-offenders and at-risk youth. They are asking the federal government to support their efforts. Low literacy can limit access to justice for accused persons who need to understand the judicial

process from arrest to sentencing. Offenders who improve their literacy skills are less likely to re-offend and literacy programs are an effective crime prevention strategy.

Aboriginal Literacy

All of the above factors affect native people and communities to a disproportionate degree. Literacy advocates requested support from the federal government for native literacy programs designed to meet the special needs of native learners, families and communities through recognition and affirmation of native culture.

Family Literacy

All of the issues addressed with the MPs and Senators illustrated the need for family literacy programs which focus on helping children from disadvantaged families who are at risk for low literacy as well as for poor health, unemployment and anti-social behavior.

While literacy is only part of the solution, federal decision-makers were given the message that support for literacy through government policies would assist learners with other fundamental challenges in their lives, such as poverty, discrimination and abuse.



Learners Network — Voices now heard

In February, six adult literacy learners met in Vancouver to talk about starting a provincial learners' network. They got together to share their ideas, hopes and plans for the future. They talked about how to connect with other learners in B.C. and find ways for learners to reach out to other learners.

Here are some of the things the group wants to do:

- Help other learners become involved in the literacy field
- Encourage new learners to come forward and let them know they're not alone

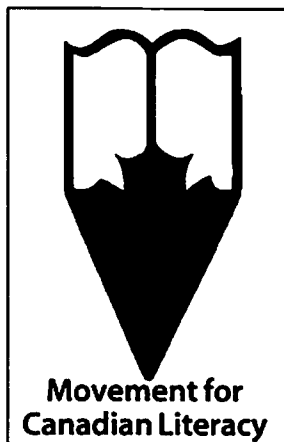
- Link with other learners, networks and events
- Take part in this special insert of our newsletter

In this special issue, five learners who were at the meeting introduce themselves, in their own words. These are their stories — who they are and what literacy has meant to them.

We invite you to use this insert — remove these pages and pass them on to other learners. Teachers can bring this insert to the attention of students in their classrooms.

If you want to find out more, call us at 1-800-663-1293.

Networks prove successful



There is already a national group for learners called The Learners' Advisory Network. It is a project of the Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL). MCL is a non-profit organization, located in Ottawa, that gives a national voice to literacy across Canada.

The MCL Learners Advisory Network is made

up of learner representatives from the provinces and territories. The Network is a national "voice" for learners. They produce a newsletter called *Learners in Action*. There have been two issues to date.

The Network:

- promotes the use of clear language

- shares news about services and products that can benefit learners
- promotes the accomplishments of learners

Literacy BC has also supported networking among learners by holding Provincial Learners' conferences. These events, held in 1990, 1993 and 1995, brought learners from literacy programs across B.C. together for three days.

As well, Regional Learner Events have been held since 1989 to give groups of learners the opportunity to share experiences, create community, discover the skills they already have and learn new ones.

Learner Events can be many different things — a workshop, writing circle, a conference, a play or even a field trip. Each event is planned and put on by a group of learners with support from their instructors. The reports on these events are collected in books called *Learners Talking to Learners*. If you would like a free copy of last year's report, call 1-800-663-1293.

Learners Tell Their Stories

Bonnie Sloat

Hi! My name is Bonnie Sloat. I was elected to the Literacy BC Board of Directors in 1998. I attended my first board meeting in October, 1998. My title is "learner." There were other members elected as learners as well.

As learners, we are going to be setting up a learners' network. Our main focus is to reach learners with difficulties in the English language — in the areas of writing, reading, speaking and spelling. These problems can be overcome with the aid of Literacy BC.
Call 1-800-663-1293.

Last year, I took the UFCW Local 2000 Training Centre's Cook Training Program. This was a very intense six month course. We were taught the proper use of the English language, mathematical skills, conflict and resolution, self-esteem and how to work with others.

We had a counsellor talk to us about substance abuse. This was a very intense topic. We learned a lot from his talk.

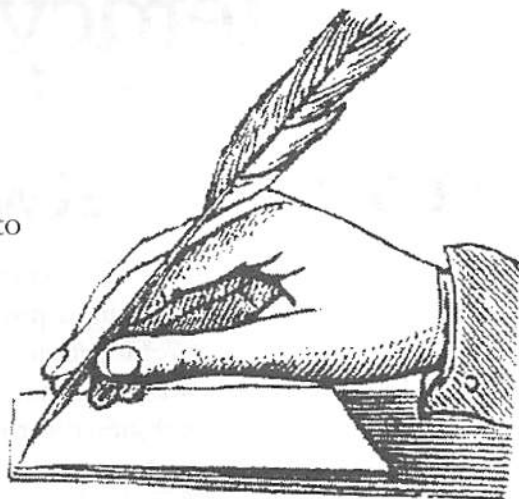
There was an excellent staff of teachers at the Training Centre. We all became literate taking this course. We were taught different mathematical skills to help us with the cooking course. English language skills helped with the cooking course also.

We were taught by one of the best chefs, Mr. John Bateman. The chef taught us all the rules of cookery and the basic skills of cookery.

We were placed in an on-the-job training program. We took three weeks of job training through this course.

I personally got a lot out of this course. When I

first came into this course, I had no self-esteem. I hold my head up very proud of what I personally accomplished in this six month course. My mathematical skills, the understanding of English.



I made a lot of different friends through this course. I have also been taught to pick up my socks and stand up for myself. I had to learn to get on with life. I personally had to deal with the death of my father while taking this course and a couple of personal problems. I still carried on and finished the course. I'm very certain that I will find gainful employment in my choice of employment. I control my destiny and fate. I feel that this course has given me a personal fulfillment.

I would like to see more of this type of learning taught. There are a lot of people without work and no skills to get the good jobs. This course has been beneficial to me and the rest of the student body.

Bonnie Sloat, Langley

Bonnie is a mother and grandmother who joined the Literacy BC Board this year after upgrading her education through the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 2000 Cook Literacy course.

Learners' Stories *(Continued)*

Ingrid Braathen

A little girl sits in a cell. This cell is made of concrete, at one end sits a rotting bench. On the bench sits a little girl. Clean, beautiful, small. Her cell is dirty, musty, dark. There is no way in, no way out. She is safe, secure, unreachable. She hides from her fears, her inabilities, her imperfections. Although in her cell, deep inside herself, she is little and safe, on the outside she is an adult — afraid, running, unable to cope in life.

She sits waiting to be found, set free, yet the adult is so afraid. They continue walking life's path together. The child safe as the adult self stumbles, falls, rises again, walks erect till life's cycle comes around again. Then the pattern begins its usual round.

One day the adult walks into a literacy centre. She begins to learn the keys to life, she finds the help for her learning problems. Little by little her self-esteem returns. A ray of hope enters the cell inside her. The ray gets bigger and brighter and soon the child finds the way out of her cell. She and her adult self have found help, wholeness, healing and together walk into a life worth living.

Ellen Szita

What if us learners could network throughout B.C?
What would we want from each other, what would we like to see?
All shared in the scheme of things trying to help each other fulfill our dreams.

What would we find in the gatherings of mind, a newspaper, the writers and artists combined? The possibilities are endless, our sharing tremendous. He reads, she writes of poetry and literacy plights. Our native people from any band helping us learn about the roots to our land. The immigrants, the refugees, a second language if you please. The sad stories and glad stories, a treasure trove to be shared. Bring your ideas and don't be scared.

We the learners in giving our time can help each other in making that climb. Dare to dream, join the team, show the world you will be seen. For greater knowledge we wish to endure to leave a life of shame and poor. No matter what the tether, stand up and be counted, and NETWORK together.

Ellen Szita, Victoria

Ellen left school in England with very limited literacy skills and spent many years in Canada hiding her problem from friends and family. With help from the Victoria READ Society and adult learning classes at Camosun College, she turned her life around. Her experience is told in Ellen's Story, a film based on her life. Now Ellen is active on the boards of Project Literacy Victoria and the Victoria READ Society.

Normal

This is me. This is one story that needs to reach those in corporate offices, those on the street, those in uniform, to the person next door.

Literacy gave me a voice, life. It can give others a voice as well. Illiteracy has no class barrier, it

touches all. It erects barriers, it destroys lives.

Literacy BC has learners on its board with voices. We are looking at ways to reach those who have not heard, there is help. This newsletter is one way.

Ingrid Braathen, Courtenay

Ingrid is co-author of Walk for Literacy: A Step in the Right Direction, a how-to book on planning a fundraising walk. She has been a learner and a board member at the Adult Learning Centre (CALLS) in Courtenay, where she also manages the Walk for Literacy each year. Ingrid has been on the Literacy BC Board for three years and is active in promoting literacy.

Learners' Stories *(Continued)*

Wendy Koivisto

Together

When I first walked into the Centre to get help with my math I was filled full of fear and pain. It was time to face my problem that I had ignored for so long. Something that separated me from the rest of the world. Made me less. In a society where failure is looked down upon it is a terrible thing to not be able to balance your cheque book or do small math problems without help. Little did I know how many other people were also affected. Nor did I know that my journey was to be such a great one.

I started at the Centre alone. It was me who had the problem and the only person I let on to that secret was my tutor. Yet there were all those people in my life up until this point who had bluntly pointed out my math mistakes. They knew my secret and they did not understand how I could have so much trouble. I would just smile and listen each time a mistake was pointed out to me. Inside I was feeling very little and marked. My tutor was a wonderful blessing to me. It was with her support and teaching that I was able to see. The math was really inside me all the time and I was good at it!

It was also at this Centre where I met other students who were being tutored. I would sit alone in my corner and the students there would say hello and ask what I was doing. My answers would be brief. The students would keep asking and my answers eventually grew, until I found myself spilling my story. I was sharing my problem with other people! Was I crazy? What would they think of me? Funny thing was, they understood some of the things I felt. These students had their own fears and pain to deal with and our paths were linked. We were all learning. We were all re-learning. We were all trying to heal. It became the

most wonderful feeling to think that I was not alone. It was not shameful to have this problem. My eyes had been opened once again. But so had my heart. It felt so good, my fear grew smaller and I wanted to tell the world what I was feeling.

I became a tutor, then joined a Board, then another Board and another Board. I spoke. My eyes were opened even wider. I began to see that even though I was speaking and some people were listening it was not enough. I became frustrated and felt let down. I wanted to quit but could not because it was too late. I was literate. Literacy was in my heart.

I cannot stop now. My journey will go on forever. For even though I can do math, I have a unending desire to spread the word. I want to let other students and learners know that they are okay and not alone. Society needs to know that literacy and illiteracy exist and are a large part of our communities. We all are affected one way or another and until we start doing something more about it, it will never be solved. Just like the stone that has been thrown into the pond and creates so many ripples, together we can give all learners and students a voice to spread their message and share their journeys.

This is for all those people who are in the middle of it and for those people who can see and hear.

Wendy Koivisto, Courtenay

Wendy first got help with her math from CALLS, the Community Adult Literacy and Learning Society. Wendy is also a member of the Advisory Committee that helps choose where Learner Events will be held each year. For the past three years, she has been the learner voice on the provincial cost-shared project review committee.

Learners' Stories *(Continued)*

Betty Carter

Hi! My name is Betty Carter. I'm a single mother of a little girl named Tessa. I would like to talk about the learners network and what kind of event took place. I was a little worried when I had to go, but everyone in and around Literacy BC really tried to communicate with one another and make you feel really welcome. I learned so very much from everyone, and there are people from all walks of life that brought so very much with them by sharing their stories and information.

The issues that arose, like how to focus on learners' issues and public awareness, are so very important. Also, access for learners, funding, getting everyone involved, teachers, colleges, and how to make learners aware of the support systems that are available. What I really like is that no-one wanted to leave anyone out, people with learning disabilities and low income families, high income, all races, ages. It was truly a learning experience. We talked about how do we give this message and through a long discussion many

doors opened up, such as student groups and internet organizations, radio and many other ways.

I have so many things I want to say but in closing, Literacy BC is the voice for all learners and they keep us strong and give people like me strength by hearing what is important and spreading it around. I like also that they keep learners across the country connected so we are stronger in numbers. I can say the learners network offered so much. I can't say it all but I can say the learners network will and can work to make the dreams come true.

Betty Carter, Vancouver

Betty is a single mother of a little girl and a student at Vancouver Community College, King Edward Campus (KEC). She is a member of the college Board of Governors and Chair of the KEC Student Association. She is also on the board of Literacy BC.

Send in your poetry

Do you have a poem you would like to publish?

Diverse City Press, a small publishing company in Quebec that specializes in books on disability issues, plans to publish a book of poetry written by people with developmental disabilities later this year.

The press invites you to send some of your poems. If you have a developmental disability, you can send up to three poems that you have written. Your poems can be on any topic. However, of particular interest is poetry that is about experiences of living with a disability.

Poems should be in English. We would also like a brief biography of you, the poet. We can't return your work so don't send us the only copy of your poems.

You can send your poems to:

'Who in the World'
c/o RR5 S32 C9,
Gibsons, BC V0N 1V0

**The deadline for submissions is
June 30, 1999.**

If you would like more information, contact Jean Bennett at the above address or call (604) 885-6290 or e-mail jean_bennett@sunshine.net.

Learners Teach "Fearless Writing"

Learners from Alberta are visiting literacy classrooms across Canada as part of a project to teach other learners what they call "a fearless approach" to writing. The learners are part of The Write to Learn Project.

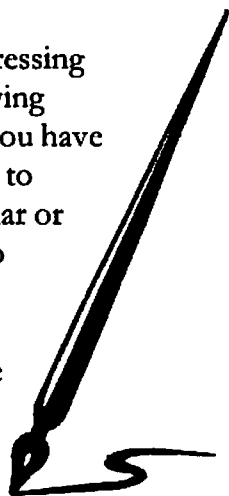
Write to Learn uses learners as teachers to practice and promote the use and value of writing. These "writing ambassadors" travel across Canada giving workshops to groups of learners and instructors. Their job is to help other learners find the joy and value in writing that they have.

Write to Learn is based on a program called "Chapters". Chapters was a literacy/lifeskills program for women on social assistance which used writing as a way to encourage the women to explore and learn about themselves and the world around them.

Out of Chapters came *Writing Out Loud*, a handbook of writing exercises. Now, the "travelling writers" use the *Writing Out Loud* exercises to share what they learned in Chapters in their workshops.

Alice, one of the learners who gives Write to Learn workshops, gave us her definition of "fearless writing".

"Fearless writing is a way of expressing yourself in writing without worrying about being judged about what you have put down on paper. I don't have to worry about spelling and grammar or making mistakes. I can always go back and make corrections later. But first I just write — from the heart. Fearless writing allows me to feel good about what I've written. It's my favourite way to communicate."



Alice describes what it means to be a writing ambassador: "For me it's having the satisfaction of helping to encourage other students to write. Seeing the smiles on the faces of students in our workshops is great. Doing a workshop as a student to other students really works because many students in our workshops relate to my situation and that makes them more at ease. Seeing other students become fearless writers too makes me feel so great inside."

In March, a Write to Learn "team" visited the Victoria READ Society where they gave workshops to READ learners and instructors.

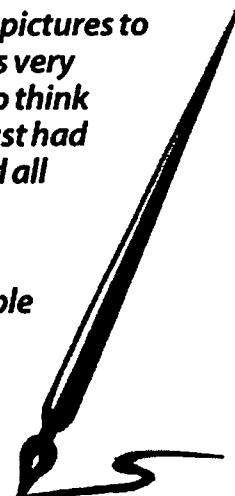
READ instructor Helen Thomas says, "They talked about their life and how much being in the Chapters program had changed their life. It was very moving. Then, they moved on to do three or four of the writing exercises from *Writing Out Loud*. And the group shared what they had written."

Helen says her class "just loved it." Here's what the students said:

"Writing has opened up my mind and has given me a voice on paper. With this new tool all things are possible, doors that were closed are now opened. I surprised myself at the things I can accomplish."

"I really liked that they used pictures to help you start writing. It was very helpful. It got you starting to think about the picture and you just had thoughts going to your head all the time."

"The workshop on writing showed how it can help people in dealing with everyday life problems. They made it look easy, showed how writing could be done by anyone and be fun."



Continued on page 11...

In the true spirit of co-operation

The Co-operators' 1999 Provincial Learner Achievement Award

The search for a well-deserving individual is on again as The Co-operators, a national insurance company, proudly sponsors the **1999 Provincial Learner Achievement Award**. This award recognizes the outstanding achievements of an adult learner in B.C.

The \$200 award will be presented at the 1999 Literacy BC Annual General Meeting in the fall. The winner also will be announced at the PGI golf tournament in July.

To qualify for the **Co-operators' Learner Achievement Award**, you must:

- have attended a literacy/ABE program for at least six months, and preferably one year
- have an excellent attendance record
- obtain a recommendation from a teacher or tutor
- have shown exceptional progress in your studies

Deadline for applications is May 28, 1999.

The winner will be chosen by a committee of adult learners.

Contact Literacy BC for application forms — 1-800-663-1293.



A Better Place For You™

Last year's winner...

Kate Nesbitt, Telkwa

Kate was chosen winner of The Co-operators' 1998 Learner Achievement Award for her outstanding work in the literacy program at Smithers Community Services. When she won the award, Kate said, "Learning is fun and exciting. I hope some day to be able to help with other people in my position. That is the only true way of repaying what has been done for me." She joined our Board last October. Kate was also one of the participants at the recent Learners' Network meeting.

Fearless Writing (Continued)

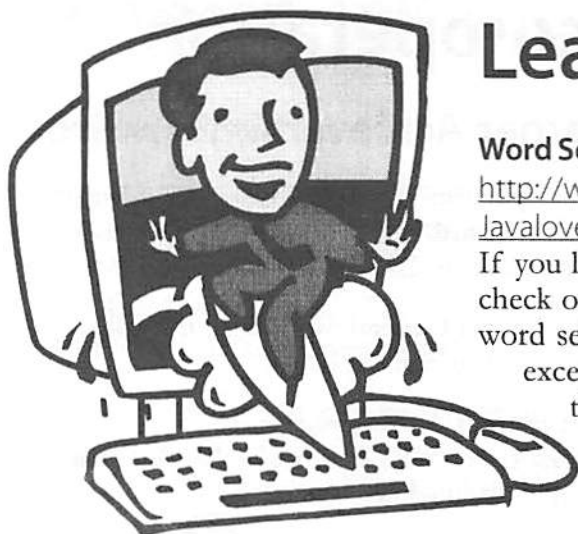
Write to learn workshops are designed to suit the specific needs of the students or groups, and can be adapted to learners of all ages and varying literacy levels. Workshop follow-up is provided through telephone contact and an interactive website. The website is called the Write to Learn Cafe. The address is <http://aaal.ab.ca/W2L>.



The Write to Learn Cafe is also on the First Class Literacy Electronic Network.

To book a workshop or find out more contact: Deborah Morgan,
Write to Learn Project Manager
4917 50 Avenue
Camrose, Alberta T4V 0S2
Phone: (403) 672-6289
Email: deborah_morgan@aaal.ab.ca





Learner-friendly Websites

Word Search

<http://www.xs4all.nl/~paridaan/Javalovers/words.htm>

If you like word search puzzles, check out this page. It's like word search puzzles on paper, except that instead of circling the letters, you drag your mouse over them.

Coin vocabulary

<http://www.ampsc.com/~engange/js/CoinVocabPRE.html>

This site tests your knowledge of Canadian coins and helps you with the spelling of each word.

Scavenger Hunt

<http://www.aitech.ac.jp/~iteslj/th/1/sg-begin.html>

You can learn a lot about the web, learn about doing research and improve your reading by doing this scavenger hunt.

Hot Links to Cool Sites for Adult Learners

<http://www.nsn.org/wkkhome/adult/ALC5.html>

Check it out!

Advice on web surfing:

Learning to use the Internet can be frustrating at first, so ask someone more experienced if you need help.

Instead of just clicking on a link to open it, hold down the mouse button and choose "New window with this link". The first site stays open behind the new window. You can open window after window and when you close them, you'll be back at the first site.

Don't forget to create "bookmarks" for your favourite sites.

We spotted this list in the The Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL) newsletter. If you have Internet access, we recommend these sites as good areas to develop your learning skills.

Mapblast

<http://www.mapblast.com>

Type in a street address with the city, province and postal code in the area that says "Canadian" and you will see a map of that area. The balloon on the right will even allow you to zoom in and see a close-up.

How far is it

<http://www.indo.com/distance/>

This site lets you find out the distance between two cities. For example, if you type in Vancouver and Halifax and click a button, it will tell you that the distance between these two cities is 2,758 miles (4,439 kilometres).

On-line at the Learners' Forum

Wendy Koivisto moderates an electronic chat-line for literacy learners called the LEARNERS' FORUM. Through the chat-line you can:

- talk to other learners in different parts of B.C.
- improve your computer, writing and communications skills
- post your stories and writing on-line for others to read

For more information about the Learners' Forum,
contact Wendy at wendykoi@hotmail.com
or call Sandy Middleton at Literacy BC 1-800-663-1293.

New Resources available at Literacy BC

Here are some new resources available for loan in the Literacy BC library. Call us at 1-800-663-1293.

Portraits of Our Lives. Literacy Series.

A set of 10 booklets based on interviews with persons across Canada who live with a range of disabilities. *Portraits* is written in clear language and designed to be used as a literacy learning resource.

On the Margins. Creating Opportunities for Learning with Computer Technology for Homeless People.

Published by Beat the Street, *On the Margins* is a study of computer technology and how it can be used effectively as an educational tool in the literacy community.

Computer Labs for Literacy Groups: a practical guide

A report on the Literacy Project at The Write Place in Parksville. Outlines the process of setting up the computer lab and how it was used once it was up and running.

Rural literacy

Themes from Rural Life. A Resource Book for Adult Literacy and ESL.

A resource to meet the needs of students in rural literacy programs. Based on the

experiences of new Canadians who emigrated to Manitoba to farm and needed a working vocabulary to interact with neighbours and the rural businesses.

For Seniors

Highlights of our Lives: A guide to creating writing circles for seniors.

This guidebook documents the development of a two-year project between a Prince George seniors activity centre and College of New Caledonia ABE English students.

Creating Plain Language Forms for Seniors. A Guide for the Public, Private, and Not-for-Profit Sectors.

A guide to developing forms that seniors will find easier to read and complete.

About Canada

EXPLORE CANADA. Our History and Geography in Plain Language. CD-ROM with Teacher's Manual.

A CD-ROM about Canada's history, geography and heritage for low-literacy and low-fluency Canadians. This resource is aimed at adult literacy and ESL learners with beginning to intermediate fluency in English or French. Includes 12 modules with exercises and activities.

Working Lives. An Adult Basic Education Project of The Writer's Alliance of Newfoundland and Labrador 1998. (four volumes)

Essays and discussion questions designed to reflect themes such as

health care, starting a small business and workers' injuries. The four titles in *Working Lives* are: *A Hell of a Good Job! Finding Work that Matters*; *New Realities in Health Care and Job Safety*; *To Every Work a Season: Adapting to Change*; *Chance and Luck: Making a Job*.

New Beginnings in Canada.

A celebration of the 100th anniversary of Frontier College, which has tutored newcomers to Canada since 1899.

Odds and Ends

Consumers Association of Canada (CAC)/Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) workshop kit and video.

The kit includes literacy information sheets, CAC workshop guidelines, newsletter, fact sheet and a press release about the project. The video, featuring Peter Gzowski, was produced by the CAC for 1,500 FWIC workshops held across Canada.

Free...free...free...

Food Tips...Shop Smart

A set of eight pages of information on nutrition, shopping, budgeting and eating well, written in plain language.

Carnegie Literacy Needs Assessment, June 1998
We have free copies.



Continued on page 14...

New Resources *(Continued)*

The latest issue of the *Bulletin* (Fall 1998) reviews the following resources. All of these can be borrowed from Literacy BC.

Writing Out Loud

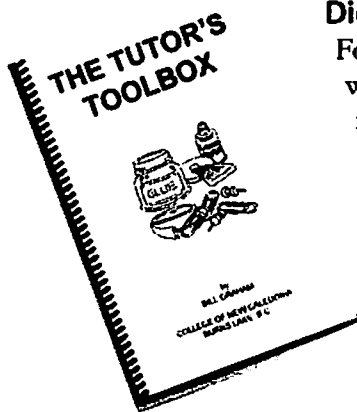
A handbook of writing ideas and exercises developed by an Alberta women's literacy/lifeskills program. (See our story on a related project, Write to Learn, on page 10 of this newsletter).

Out in the Open: Life on the Street

Photographs and accompanying text by the street people of Victoria.

THE TUTOR'S TOOLBOX is back!

We have reprinted this popular tutor guide. Yours for the cost of shipping and handling. Call us at 1-800-663-1293 for your copies.



Amazing! Canadian Newspaper Stories, and Amazing 2!

Canadian Newspaper Stories (with Instructor's Manual).

Twelve real newspaper stories from across Canada re-written in plain language.

The Canadian Dictionary for Schools

With large print and illustrations.

Oxford Elementary Learner's Dictionary

For the beginning reader and writer. Large print and illustrations.

Other titles available

Shishalh Stories. Traditional (native) stories of British Columbia.

It's Not Okay Anymore: Your Personal Guide to Ending Abuse, Taking Charge and Loving Yourself.

A Guide for Using Theme Units with ABE/ESL Literacy Classes

Pine Candle Adult New Reader's Series (six titles). With student support materials. **Alberta Highlights; Helpful Home Hints; Hockey Canada's National Game; Night Skies; Rodeo West; Souped Up.**

Two Old Women: An Alaska Legend of Betrayal, Courage and Survival.

Maskmaking with Paper (20-minute how-to video).

hand in hand, helping your child grow Perinatal Literature in Plain Language (1997)

This handy, plain language manual is designed for new Canadians, teen parents, and adults with low literacy skills.

The manual covers pre-natal information, labour and delivery, caring for newborns, and caring for children up to two years of age.

hand in hand has been reprinted by the National Literacy Secretariat.

Phone Literacy BC for your copies at
1-800-663-1293.

We'll charge you shipping and handling only.



Current Events

National Volunteer Week, April 18 to 24

During this special week, over 5,000 community agencies and volunteer centres across Canada will organize special events. This week is in honour of — and to give thanks to — the millions of Canadians who donate time and energy to volunteer causes.

National Volunteer Week is a perfect opportunity for literacy groups to recognize their volunteer tutors.

Lapel Pins

Literacy BC has a new supply of literacy symbol lapel pins. The pins are \$1.10 each, with a \$5.00 discount for orders of 50 or more. If you would like to order some to recognize your volunteers, call us now at 1-800-663-1293.

Certificates

Literacy BC is also creating new certificates to recognize the valuable literacy service provided by volunteers in communities throughout B.C.

Call us to place your order.

BC Book Week

An exciting week of book-related events and readings is coming with the first annual BC Book Week from April 17 to 24, 1999. BC Book Week was conceived as a way to increase the impact of Canada Book Day on Friday, April 23. The week culminates in the BC Book Prize Awards dinner on Saturday, April 24 at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre.

Events taking place throughout British Columbia celebrate the necessity of books in our lives and focus on promoting literacy to adults and children alike.

For a complete list of events and how you can become involved, please call Janice Halko at the Association of Book Publishers at (604) 684-0228.

Donor Appreciation

Thank you to the following individuals who have donated \$100 or more to Literacy BC:

School District #48 – Howe Sound
Burns & Associates Consulting
Breen Egan
Manulife Financial
Carla Bullinger

And to those who have contributed up to \$100:

Marrett Green
Anita Slater
Kathy Ireland
Justice Institute of B.C. employees
Deloitte & Touche employees

Desktop publishing provided by **McIVOR** Communications Inc.

Feedback on *Imprints*

Some of you wrote or called to comment on our "new look" for *Imprints*, which we introduced in the January Newsletter. Here is a selection of your comments:

- "Wow! I really liked the way the newsletter looked when I got it yesterday. It is professional looking yet clean, and the layout is friendly. I enjoyed the content immensely as this is my area of interest."
- "The newsletter is very well put out...really good...very interesting. The captions are captivating...the graphics are good, and I like the use of italics. The information is there at your fingertips."
- "My issue of the Literacy B.C. newsletter just arrived — looks real nice!"
- "I think the newsletter looks nice in its new format."
- "Hi...Great job! The revised newsletter looks wonderful. Can we get another five copies of this edition?"
- "The newsletter looks really spiffy! Very professional and easy-to-read. Shows that a lot of work was put into it."

Flight for Freedom Awards

Canada Post invites nominations for the annual 1999 Literacy Awards. The awards are presented to recognize the commitment many Canadians, literacy organizations and educators make to literacy in Canada.

There are three Award Categories:

The Individual Literacy Achievement Awards
(individuals).

The Literacy Leadership Awards (literacy organizations, workplace literacy programs, special community initiatives).

The Literacy Education Awards (educators, tutors, program initiators).

A computer system or cash prize will be awarded to each winner in the Individual Literacy Achievement Awards category (winner's choice).

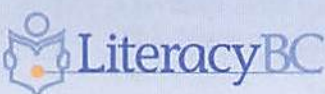
Winners in the other two categories — Leadership and Education — will receive a cash award. All winners will receive framed certificates.

Applications must be received in Ottawa no later than 12 Noon, local time, Friday, May 14, 1999.

Literacy BC has copies of the brochure and application package. For your copy, please call us at 1-800-663-1293.



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